

ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

HON. KATHERINE HARRIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which we observe this week. This landmark piece of legislation continues to make a daily difference in the lives of the American people—not only in the lives of those with disabilities, but in all of our lives.

The Americans with Disabilities Act laid the groundwork to direct our nation toward equal opportunity for all. Today, the National Council on Disability, working with their federal partners, keeps up the hard work of striving to meet this vital goal. I am proud to have one of my Florida constituents serving as an appointee to the United States Access Board, which helps ensure accessibility in the design of Federal facilities. I applaud her commitment and dedication.

As Florida Secretary of State, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to apply the mission of the ADA to the cause of election reform. In Florida, we worked to remove the obstacles that were preventing individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the political process. With this legislation, Florida became the first state in the Nation to enact a law to secure the voting rights of individuals with disabilities.

We have fought hard to live up to the promise of our founding and to honor the dignity of every individual, and to extend the rights, privileges and opportunities of that promise to all our citizens. The Americans with Disabilities Act was part of a long line of landmark achievements that have expanded freedom and opportunity in the United States. Let us continue working toward the goals of this law—to remove the obstacles that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying the full rights that too many Americans take for granted.

TRIBUTE TO LANCE ARMSTRONG

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, Lance Armstrong won an unprecedented seventh Tour de France race over the weekend. His life, both on and off the race track, is a great example of hard work and perseverance. Albert Carey Caswell, a U.S. Capitol Tour Guide, who is also a prolific poet, wrote the following poem in tribute to Lance Armstrong and his accomplishments. I believe that reading this poem will provide encouragement and inspiration to my colleagues as we consider Mr. Armstrong's great accomplishments.

A REAL FINE TOUR DE FORCE OF LIFE

WITH HEART AND SOUL, BODY AND MIND . . .

AND LEGS AND ARMSTRONG

This force, this presence . . . which guides us along life's path and roads . . .

Directing us from deep down within . . . this burning force, which lasts in life we follow as we go.

As emanating, from so very deep within our very souls, this voice . . . of this our chosen goal, of this our life's Tour De Force of Life as shows!

While, riding along life's roads, As there upon our paths as rode, embarking on this journey we call life . . . as ever onward we go . . .

To win the race of life, we all must follow a code of courage and sacrifice . . . until, approaching our final nights, upon this our earth as rode.

For in the game of life, there is but one thing which makes us bright . . . of which makes us all contenders.

Just one difference between winning and losing . . . for it's "The Heart" from which all great things are so rendered!

For True Champions come in all shapes and sizes . . . but, it's what's found within their hearts as where lies their true and golden splendor . . .

While, traveling through life's country sides, As over her mountain tops we climb, as along life's rivers which we wind . . . as by her we glide . . .

In this our most valiant of quests, To Be The Best . . . as before us so lies the answer so . . . Of this great test, within our hearts inside . . .

Do we get up when we fall down?

While, upon each new stage in this race called life . . . do our hearts burn bright in our souls as found?

For in this our greatest of quests, To Be The Best . . . will we one day because of these our precious gifts, perhaps be so Heaven bound?

In Life . . . to go for the Gold!

To cheat death, to reach down inside of yourself as your soul stretch . . . until, none is left, oh, so very bold!

To be a true Champion, To be The Best, to rewrite history and the records books while upon our life's valiant quest . . . as Lance so-Gold.

A True Great Champion . . . among just mere men.

A winner, a man of courage . . . of passion . . . of fury and heart . . . from the start . . . to the middle . . . until, the very end!

A man who knows but only one creed . . . who knows no bounds . . . to push the envelope as he is found . . . as his quest for victory never so ends!

A Real Fine Tour De Force of Life . . . A Real Tour De France . . . as is this Tour De Lance!

A True Terminator, among his fellow athletes as a most historic creator . . . as ever onward he'll advance . . .

For there is no mountain too steep for him to climb, no cure too sharp for him to ride in time . . . with but one thing on his mind, that Golden Chance!

With Heart and Soul . . . Body and Mind . . . and Legs and Armstrong!

As this great American Hero, has shown to this our world . . . why, with his character he so belongs . . .

For in Sir Lancelot, we see this Valiant Knight of Courage's Quest . . . reaching deep down into our souls, as with his tests . . . his sweet life's song!

While, there looking into the very face of death!

Pedaling uphill, how Lance achieved the ultimate victory . . . while "cheating death" . . . in his most valiant of all quests . . .

But not to lull, but to move ever forward somehow . . . on so courageously now . . . while, to this our world he's shown his very best!

And, as Lance rides onward into history. . . My child, I bid you to learn and see . . . and glean from his life lessons, all about what's within a heart you need!

What it takes to wind and to succeed, about hope and faith, about character and courage and dedication within great hearts within you to succeed.

In traveling down the road of life, For in Lance, we so see A Great Fine Tour De Force of Life, to so carry with us in our hearts about God and Faith and Sacrifice!

A true celebration of the Heart and Soul of Courage and Faith . . . and it's true fine worth in Gold, this his A Fine Tour De Force of Life!

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE CUBAN REGIME'S MOST RECENT MEASURES OF EXTREME REPRESSION AGAINST MEMBERS OF CUBA'S PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution condemning the Cuban dictatorship's most recent measures of extreme repression against Cuba's pro-democracy movement.

Following Castro's condemnable, March 2003, crackdown against peaceful pro-democracy activists, the European Union correctly took measures against the Cuban regime. However, in January 2005, the European Union suspended these measures and resumed its policy of so-called "engagement" with the terrorist regime in Havana. This policy of appeasement includes inviting regime officials to diplomatic events and shamelessly disinviting Cuba's brave pro-democracy activists. Unfortunately, on July 14, 2005, the Government of France invited the dictatorship's Foreign Minister to the French Embassy in Havana for a Bastille Day celebration. And, the Government of France did not invite the heroic members of the democratic opposition to the same celebration.

To protest this cowardly policy, members of the pro-democracy opposition in Cuba sought, on July 22, to demonstrate in front of the French Embassy in a peaceful and orderly manner for the liberation of all Cuban political prisoners, and to denounce the current policy of the European Union.

In a viscous display of gangster-style repression, the Cuban regime mobilized its repugnant state security apparatus to try to intimidate and harass the peaceful demonstrators. Members of the Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba, who were planning a peaceful demonstration in front of the French Embassy in Havana on the morning of Friday, July 22, were the victims of hate acts ("acts of repudiation"), their homes were ransacked, and at least 20 of them were arrested. Among those arrested were the leaders of the Cuban opposition Martha Beatriz Roque, Félix Bonne Carcassés and Rene Gómez Manzano. Mr. Gómez Manzano and other opposition members remain in prison as I speak.

This is one more example of the brutality of a dictatorship that does not allow freedom of

expression for Cubans, and instructs its thugs to assault the members of the peaceful opposition for the "crime" of seeking freedom, democracy and respect for human rights in Cuba. The world needs to respond in the strongest possible terms to this latest violation of the most elemental human rights in Cuba. This resolution condemns the latest violations of human rights by the Cuban regime, a regime of gangsters, by gangsters and for gangsters, led by a gangster in chief.

HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening not only to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, known as the ADA, but also to acknowledge my unwavering support of the ADA and of people with disabilities.

This Act has created positive changes, large and small, for disabled people everywhere. The access ramps we see leading into buildings are examples. Water fountains and sinks are more accessible. Services for the sight- and the hearing-impaired are more common. Employment discrimination is decreasing.

Another important development is that the Americans with Disabilities Act has mobilized the disabilities advocacy community. Since 1990, people with disabilities have grown into seasoned advocates. They have unified their voices and are being heard from the halls of Congress to the every city and town across America. Unity has added strength to their voice and confidence to their actions. And they are being heard, loud and clear. Every year, Congress has considered legislation affecting people with disabilities, whether it be concerning Social Security benefits, education, tax provisions, labor standards, or other issues. The Americans with Disabilities Act provided a comprehensive legislative starting point—but there is still so much more to be done.

Perhaps more than anything else, this legislation has given hope to disabled people here in Dallas and across this nation. The Americans with Disabilities Act affirmed that people with disabilities should have as many opportunities to succeed in life as any other citizen. Its message is one of equality. To the 14,589 disabled workers in Texas' 30th District, and others across the nation, the message is: "You belong."

HONORING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 15th anniversary of landmark civil rights legislation for Americans with disabilities—the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This landmark law was passed with strong bipartisan support and signed into law by President George H.W. Bush. As we mark the 15th anniversary of this historic event, we celebrate the tremendous progress and new doors that have been opened to individuals with disabilities as a result of the ADA.

The purpose of the ADA was to provide clear and comprehensive national standards to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities. As a result, individuals with disabilities are now able to live in their homes and have access to new careers. Accessible busses and trains and better paratransit systems have made it possible for more people with disabilities to get to work and school, enjoy restaurants and theaters and travel.

The ADA has improved society, not only for the 14 percent of Americans over the age of five who have at least one disability. Common-sense accommodations like curb cuts and close captioning have also benefited Americans without disabilities.

On this important anniversary, we must remember that while we have come a long way in eliminating barriers, critical work remains to ensure all Americans can live up to their full potential. Tragically, we still have stereotypes and misconceptions that affect people with disabilities. Sadly, we still have examples like the boy in Pennsylvania who was the target of discrimination by his T-ball coach. This is not an isolated incident, as I have learned of another boy in Kansas who was denied the right to play T-ball like any other 7-year-old because he had cerebral palsy. Fortunately, because of the ADA, that boy was eventually allowed to play T-ball.

Giving people with disabilities the right to participate fully in society is what this landmark legislation is all about.

As co-chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus, I know that the ADA is a major achievement and much has been accomplished over the last 15 years. As we celebrate how far we've come, let us also recommit to creating a society in which no barrier stands in the way of fully participating in our society.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes on July 22, 2005. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote 415, on agreeing to the Velázquez of New York amendment No.4 to H.R. 3070—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act, I would have voted "no."

Rollcall vote 416, on passage of H.R. 3070—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE ALPHONSO CHRISTIAN

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, the United States Virgin Islands has lost one of its outstanding success stories as prominent lawyer and Judge Alphonso Christian passed away Saturday, July 23, 2005.

With the passing of this Native son we have lost a premiere trail blazer. This outstanding Virgin Islander, born in Frederiksted, St. Croix, made substantial contributions to the Territory and in particular to the island of St. Thomas, the place he sailed to as a young man to begin his career. St. Thomas became his home, and it is where he began a flourishing and illustrious career, raising his children to be another generation of a progressive Family that is especially renowned in St. Croix for its industriousness, hard work and diligence.

Christian, 88, died of heart failure at Roy L. Schneider Hospital on St. Thomas. A jurist, attorney, government administrator, teacher and community activist, Christian had arisen from humble beginnings on St. Croix. Christian was born on August 2, 1916 to Peter and Wilhelmina Christian in Frederiksted. His well disciplined upbringing and strong will to succeed during his child hood set the tone for his achievements to come.

He graduated as the Valedictorian of the Commercial Class at St. Patrick's and started as Clerk Typist at the Agricultural Station at Anna's Hope. He later came to St. Thomas where his speed and accuracy in this position paved the way for his becoming the Stenographer to Mr. Herbert Lockhart of the A.H. Lockhart & Co., a company that was the hub of all commercial activity on St. Thomas.

He worked his way from stenographer to reporter, and served as secretary of the Virgin Islands Municipal Council, and all the while studied law by correspondence from the well known LaSalle School. Impressed by his legal intellect, although he had never practiced law, Christian was allowed to take the bar exam without having attended law school. He passed at his first attempt with high marks and was admitted to the V.I. Bar in 1949.

Christian became involved with civic and political organizations while studying law by correspondence with the well-known LaSalle School.

His activity in politics began with his involvement in the first political party, the V.I. Progressive Guide. That position was the springboard to other positions such as Executive Secretary to the Municipal Council and the Legislative Assembly.

He was named legal aide to the Municipal Council of St. Thomas and St. John and the Legislative Assembly in 1949 and Judge of the Police Court in 1951. For the three years he served as Judge of the police Court, he also served as Coroner Recorder of Deeds, Chairman of the Board of Elections, United States Commissioner and Chairman of the Fourth of July Celebrations.

In 1972, he was appointed Commissioner of Public Safety of the Virgin Islands and served in the position until 1975, when he practiced law full-time. In April 1978, he was named the first Senior Sitting Judge of the Territorial